

A high-level monthly briefing on operations and activities at the Department of Energy's Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory – Home of Science and Engineering Solutions. Work at the lab supports the Department's business lines of environmental quality, energy resources, national security and science.

■ ENERGY RESOURCES – INEEL Tabbed for New Leadership Role

Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham on July 15 announced a major mission realignment for the INEEL by establishing the site as the nation's leading center of nuclear energy research and development. Abraham announced that INEEL would receive an additional \$5 million in funding to "jump-start" the transition of the site from Environmental Management to the Office of Nuclear Energy. The laboratory, which has been managed by the department's environmental management program, will now be reassigned to the Office of Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology, where it will become a major contributor to initiatives such as Generation IV nuclear energy systems and advanced, proliferation-resistant fuel cycle technology. Much of the transition is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

■ ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY – International Certification Awarded to Lab

The INEEL has formally achieved a stringent international environmental certification known as ISO 14001. The certification was given after an independent auditor performed extensive checks of the INEEL's environmental management systems to see if the INEEL meets international standards in the way it formulates environmental policy, plans and executes environmental work, and measures and reviews its own environmental performance. Also checked was the way INEEL performs corrective action when any area needing improvement is found. "Our employees deserve great credit for achieving this difficult certification," said INEEL President and Laboratory Director Bill Shipp.

■ NATIONAL SECURITY – Lab Director Testifies Before Congress on Homeland Security

INEEL President and Laboratory Director Bill Shipp this month testified before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on the roles the national laboratories play in homeland security. Shipp emphasized the combined strengths of the national laboratories, calling them a powerhouse of innovation. He spoke of the labs' inherent ability to integrate, leveraging assets from the public and private sector organizations and universities. He emphasized DOE labs' unique facilities to put homeland security-enhancing technologies to the test. Shipp presented examples of INEEL's ability to innovate, integrate and evaluate, describing an award-winning chemical weapon detection technology and complex INEEL-designed and -deployed military programs. He concluded by advocating the INEEL's selection as the nation's Critical Infrastructure Test Range, citing the lab's large continuous geographic area, its complex, secure and isolatable infrastructure, and talented engineers and scientists.

■ SCIENCE – New Bioproducts Institute Formed

The INEEL and University of Idaho are among four major Northwest research organizations coming together to partner with industry, processors and growers to develop new methods for converting agricultural and food processing residue and wastes into commercially valuable "bio-based" energy and industrial products. Other members of the new Northwest Bioproducts Research Institute include the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Wash. and Washington State University. Under terms of a recently signed agreement, the participating universities and federal research laboratories will collaborate to form a nationally renowned, multi-disciplinary research and development program to examine and develop methods for converting agricultural and food processing residue and wastes into bio-based fuels, power and industrial products, such as chemicals for plastics, solvents and fibers.

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